

Minutes of the Montana Cutting Horse Association (MCHA)
Board of Directors' Meeting

January 14th, 2023
Best Western Grand Tree Inn
1325 N 7th Ave, Bozeman, MT

President Peri Suenram called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m.

Directors Present: President Peri Suenram, Vice President Michelle Van Dyke, Doug Pearce, Clayton Miller, Roy Oliver, Darrell Lee, and Josh Kiemig

Directors Present Via Zoom: John Seymour

Directors Absent: Rob Fraser

Others Present: Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser

Others Present Via Zoom: National Director Suzanne Nellen and Theresa Nelson

The minutes of the November 30th, 2022, Board of Directors' meeting had been distributed to the Board members prior to the meeting. Minutes were approved on a voice vote.

OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

President Peri Suenram welcomed everyone to the meeting. She thanked the past Board members and past President Doug Pearce for their service, and welcomed the new Board members.

President Peri Suenram proposed to the Board a standing BOD meeting each month. She asked if the first Wednesday of every month would be convenient for everyone at 7:00 p.m. The Board felt that it was a good idea to have a standing meeting and Wednesday worked well for everyone. Darrell Lee noted that if there was nothing pressing to discuss the meeting may be canceled and there would be flexibility for a change if need be. Clayton Miller asked if the 1st Wednesday fell close to a show, could the Board have an in person meeting. The Board agreed that it would be nice to have a face to face meeting if possible. Darrell made the motion for the 1st Wednesday of every month be a standing date for the BOD meeting via zoom or in person, if possible, unless deemed unnecessary by the President, seconded by Doug Pearce and passed on a voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

2023 Show Schedule

President Peri Suenram asked all the Board members if they were able to review the tentative show schedule that was sent. She noted that in putting together the tentative schedule she and Vice President Michelle Van Dyke looked back on the membership survey from 2022. The membership collectively wanted their show season to start in April and end in late September or early October. They also asked for two shows per month to be approved MCHA shows and would like those shows to be three day shows. The other request was to balance shows between the East and West sides of the states. Peri noted that for the Dillon shows it is very important to have Utah support and with that MCHA will need to approve a Utah show to help draw cutters to Dillon. Peri said she spoke with the current UCHA president and Utah would be willing to approve one Dillon show if MCHA would approve the April Ogden show. Darrell Lee said he fully supports approving the Ogden show and understands the need for Utah support.

Vice President Michelle Van Dyke explained that she included several area shows on the show schedule even if they are not MCHA approved. Michelle updated the Board on the status of the Vaughn show. She said they are still struggling to obtain cattle and the only available date the barn is open will be May 26-28. Peri and Michelle explained to the Board that the approval of a second Torrington, WY show will depend on the Vaughn show coming together. Clayton Miller asked the Board what they can pay for cattle, Peri said \$35/head is all they can pay and perhaps \$45 if trucking is included. Clayton also asked about the stalls and how many head they may need for Vaughn. Darrel said no less than 450 head and Peri said there should be plenty of stalls at 100, with the option of overflow at the Great Falls Fair Grounds. John Seymore said he has concerns on the Vaughn show with so much uncertainty and the risk of losing money on the show. Collectively the Board decided to make a decision on Vaughn, and the second Torrington WY approval, at the next BOD meeting February 1st.

The Board asked Clayton what his thoughts were on the Year End Show dates. Clayton said he did have an October date open, 10-14, and would be willing produce the Year End Show over that weekend. Kelly Fraser noted that the September 2022 show for Millers worked well with the Futurity and for 2023 they would like to do 3 shows over 4 days, making it a hard weekend for the Year End, since they would not want to give up showing on Sunday. Clayton said he would be willing to add a futurity to the October show, in hopes of drawing more cutters. He said he will now have 106 covered box stalls available.

*****See attached list of shows approved by the Board to be listed on the website. The Board reserves the right to change approved shows at the February 1st, 2023 meeting.*****

The Board would like the website to list area shows even if they are not MCHA approved.

President Peri Suenram opened the floor for a discussion on the dual Circuit approval requirements for the 2023 show year. John Seymour said he would talk with Allison Walker at NCHA regarding our shows requesting dual approval. He said at this time NCHA does not want to allow dual approval but because Montana is in a unique position they may be more open to relaxing the requirements. The main change for our shows for 2023 is NCHA only allowing 5

show numbers to be used for Dual Circuit Approval per show producer. That means only 5 show days can have dual approval. John said he would work with Theresa Nelson and Kelly Fraser on the shows they are asking for dual approval. Peri and Michelle said they would like to ask UtahCHA to ask for dual circuit approval on the April Ogden show. Kelly asked the Board if they would like her to ask for dual circuit approval for the Miller's Horse Palace shows, which they would like to have if possible. Theresa Nelson told the Board that if NCHA does stay with only the 5 show days for dual approval, the Board is going to have to pick and choose what shows they would like to ask approval on. Peri said that she would like Theresa, Kelly, John, Suzanne and Michelle as a committee to report back on the dual approvals at the Feb 1st or March 1st Board meeting.

2023 Approved Classes

President Peri Suenram asked the Board if they felt there was a need to change the list of approved classes for the 2023 show year. The Board felt there was no need to change the class list for 2023. Our MCHA 2023 Approved Classes will be as follows:

Open
Non-Pro
\$50,000 Amateur
Unlimited Amateur
\$25,000 Novice Horse
\$25,000 Novice Horse Non-Pro
Junior Youth
Senior Youth
\$35,000 Non-Pro
\$15,000 Amateur
\$5,000 Novice Horse
\$5,000 Novice Horse Non-Pro
\$2,000 Limit Rider
**Open Derby
**Non-Pro Derby
**Open Classic
**Non-Pro Classic

**It will be up to the show producer whether to offer these classes. All other approved classes must be offered in order for a show to receive MCHA approval.

**1,500 Novice Horse may be offered by the show producer; however, it is not an approved MCHA class and will not be eligible for year-end awards.

**The Board discussed the possibility of a 2-handed or Rancher class to be offered. They decided that if a show producer feels there would be interest it would be up to them to offer the class/classes.

The Board discussed having a year end award for the Futurity class, but since there are not 3 in State shows that offer a Futurity class it was decided to try and do a “Circuit” award instead over the two Miller’s shows.

Peri asked Clayton if he was still willing to hold free Youth classes at his shows. Clayton said 100% he was going to offer that to our Youth cutters. Darrell then suggested that we have a youth scholarship cutting at all of the Miller’s cuttings, the Board agreed.

Show Rules Update

President Peri Suenram asked Theresa Nelson and Kelly Fraser to update the Board on the 2023 changes NCHA has made to the show rules. Theresa noted that NCHA Convention and NCHA Weekend flip-flopped dates. She said another big change was the addition of the Select Non-Pro class which was added to appease people who no longer are eligible for the \$50,000 Amateur class. Kelly said that the biggest change for her was the increase in the entry fee cap on jackpot classes, up to \$125. This should allow for a better payout in those lower classes. Theresa said the other rule changes were geared towards the larger LAE shows that have go rounds and a finals, which will not affect MCHA shows.

Never Won A Buckle Class (NWAB)

President Peri Suenram told the Board there was such a positive feedback on the NWAB shootout in Big Piney for 2022 she would like to see it repeated in 2023. The Board agreed and will give \$1000.00 again towards awards. Peri will work with Danielle Pace and Weston Sampson again on the joint effort with UtahCHA to put this all together. Peri asked the Board if they would like to offer a NWAB class at every MCHA show, Roy said to encourage new members it would be beneficial to offer it at every show. Roy Oliver made the motion to offer the NWAB class at every MCHA show including Miller’s, seconded by Josh Keimig, and passed on a voice vote. Josh and Kelly will work on ordering buckles to have on hand. The show committee will have to determine which three shows will be qualifiers for the NWAB shootout in Big Piney.

2023 Year End Awards

Minimum Participation

President Peri Suenram discussed the participation rule used in 2022 and asked the Board their feelings on using the same rule for 2023. The Board said they felt last year worked out well for awards and this year in looking at the show schedule there would be a nice selection of Montana shows. Peri stated the rule was in order to qualify for a year end award, you must show at three “Year End Qualifier” show locations, in the same class. John Seymour said he appreciated the awards staying in state or going to those who supported in state shows. Darrell made the motion to implement the three in state show participation rule for 2023, seconded by Roy Oliver and carried on a voice vote.

Membership Deadline

Membership deadline will remain May 1st per Article II, Section 4 of the MCHA bylaws. Members must buy their membership by this date for any earnings prior to May 1st to count towards year end standings.

Championship Awards

President Peri Suenram discussed the awarding of five saddle vouchers valued at \$2100 for the 2022 year. Peri said that there was some negative feedback on the raffle saddle given at the Banquet. Doug Pearce said he did not feel that auctioning off left over awards at the Banquet was the right decision. He would like to see those awards held over for a silent auction in Big Piney. Peri asked the Board how they would like to handle the 2023 awards. Kelly Fraser asked the Board to clarify if they were considering saddles again in 2023. The Board said they would like the Championship award to be present and given to the recipient at the Banquet. They did not feel they could afford a saddle for each class. Vice President Michelle Van Dyke suggested a bit with the MCHA logo or MCHA Champion on the cheek piece and have those bits to give at the banquet. Clayton Miller suggested approaching several bit makers with our proposed 14 bits and ask for a bid from them. Michelle said you could also ask for sponsorships from the maker chosen. Darrell said he would like a participation award given out at the banquet as well, Doug agreed as long as that award was budgeted and planned for as well as advertised to the membership. Peri said she would like to see very nice 1st, 2nd, awards and could give awards to 4th place. Roy Oliver suggested some nice headstall buckles engraved with MCHA. Peri said she would like to assign an awards committee and it will be up to them what the awards will be and what placing to give the awards out to.

Special Awards

President Peri Suenram asked the Board if there needed to be discussion on the special awards for 2023, she asked specifically about the Non-Pro/Amateur Horse of the Year. After discussion the Board made the following decisions for Special Awards.

The Special Awards for 2023 will be as follows:

- MCHA Open Horse of the Year – Most money won including both weekend and LAE classes.
- MCHA Non-Pro / Amateur Horse of the Year – Top horse in each Non-Pro or Amateur class including LAE classes, to be voted on by the membership.
- Adult Rookie of the Year. Eligible candidates include adult MCHA members in good standing, having \$0 NCHA lifetime earnings at the beginning of the show year and ending the show year with the most money won.
- Kim Asay/Most Inspirational (Voted on by the Board of Directors). The award goes to someone thought to be a fierce competitor, showing great sportsmanship both in and out of the arena, while continuing to place a high value on family, friends, and faith.

MCHA Approval Fees

#10 of the MCHA Rules and Regulations states that there is a \$4/run approval fee. The Board felt that at this time it is not in the best interest of MCHA or its associated show producers to ask for approval fees in 2023. Doug Pearce moved to wave the rule for the 2023 show season, Michelle seconded and passed unanimously on a voice vote.

2023 Operating Budget and Current Financials

Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser provided the Board with the 2022 year end P and L as well as the yearly comparison and the show finals for 2022. She stated that since the General Membership meeting there has not been much activity in the account. She noted that earmarked for 2022 are two saddle vouchers that have not been collected but are set against the P and L for last year. President Peri Suenram noted that there was a profit of over \$14,000.00 for the year. Kelly said MCHA has \$130,000.00 in a CD that will come up in May and the current QuickBooks balance shows over \$36,000.00. She said the Budget for 2023 is an estimate based on a three-year average. For the most part MCHA considers a break even on the shows for budgeting purposes. Peri noted that with everything that 2022 brought to the Board she was very pleased to see how the year shaped up financially.

President Peri Suenram asked the Board if they would like to continue offering free memberships to the prior year's sponsors of \$400 or higher. John Seymore made the motion to continue offering free memberships to the MCHA Sponsors at a level of \$400 or higher, seconded by Doug Pearce and carried on a voice vote.

President Peri Suenram opened the floor to discussion on the Year End Awards budget. She said she would like to allow some flexibility for the awards committee and have them present to the Board what they feel is needed. She also would like to implement in 2023, as done in the past, that the award recipients must be responsible for shipping their awards or having someone pick up their awards if they are not able to attend the banquet, the Board agreed. Sec./Tres. Kelly Fraser said that perhaps the Board should set some parameters for the Budget. Peri said she is comfortable with between \$22,000 and \$30,000 for awards. She would like the committee to build a package and bring it back to the Board for further consideration.

Annual Review of Secretary/Treasurer Compensation – Closed Session

Following discussion by the Board, it was decided that the 2023 compensation for the MCHA Secretary/Treasurer position would remain at \$1000.00/Month.

2023 Committee Assignments

President Peri Suenram assigned the following committees:

Show Committee: Per Constitution Vice President Michelle Van Dyke is Chairman, Darrell Lee, and Josh Keimig

Year End Awards: John Seymour, Josh Keimig and Peri Suenram

Year End Banquet: Rob Fraser, Roy Oliver and Doug Pearce

Sponsorship: All Board Members **Goal of \$20,000 for 2023**

Nominating: Doug Pearce, Darrell Lee and Clayton Miller

Rules Committee: All Board Members

Issues for National Directors

President Peri Suenram asked John Seymour to bring the Board up to date on the Circuit boarder changes. John said he has been working with Skip Jones and Allison Walker, at NCHA, to change the Big Sky Circuit to include Montana and Wyoming, maybe North Dakota and South Dakota and moving Minnesota to a different circuit. This is something that would be implemented in 2024 after discussion with the NCHA finance committee. He said there are several options but the goal is to have Montana and Wyoming as a Circuit by themselves. John has noted to NCHA that the MCHA membership does not want to split the state. He has been in contact with other area National Directors regarding this.

Peri asked John if he has any information on the location of NCHA Weekend or Circuit Finals. At this time John does not know of any applications into the NCHA office. Peri said she would like to see 2024 NCHA Weekend at Miller's. She would like for John and Clayton to work together on that show. Clayton would like the association to look at some show possibilities at the Metra in Billings. He said there will be new management and a greater possibility of their willingness to work with horse shows.

Sec./Treas. Kelly Fraser asked the reasoning for NCHA to not set dates well in advance, for instance having convention dates known for 2024 no later than June 2023. This would allow affiliates to plan shows accordingly, especially when having to reserve venues. Peri said she would like to see more affiliate support from NCHA. She would like the National Directors to lobby for more support and recognize the weekend cutters. Peri said it is important for MCHA to utilize their National Directors so we do have a voice in NCHA. She reminded the Board that at the GM meeting it was approved that travel expenses to the convention would be paid for by MCHA. Peri said we have a voice we need to use it.

Encouragement of New Membership

President Peri Suenram said the free youth classes at Miller's is a great example but there is more we can do as an association. Clayton Miller suggested having a cutting before another event, like doing something with the NILE or State Fair in Great Falls. Michelle said they used to have an exhibition at the NILE, Darrell said he remembered having FFA and 4-H kids there who were enthralled with the horses. The Board discussed having a set time at the NILE where we could have an exhibition, we need to get in touch with the Horse Show Manager to facilitate it. Roy Oliver suggested having a clinic, perhaps before the first show of the year at Miller's. Roy and Kelly would be willing to work on the proposed clinic.

Josh Keimig brought to the attention of the Board the negative feelings some Treasure State CHA members have toward MCHA. The Board would like to rectify that feeling they would offer free memberships to TSCHA members who attend a MCHA show. Darrell Lee also noted that new faces at the cuttings need to be welcomed. He suggested all the Board members make an effort to approach those new cutters and engage them so they feel comfortable.

Signatory on MCHA Wells Fargo Checking Account

President Peri Suenram, past President Doug Pearce and Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser are currently on the Wells Fargo checking account. Doug Pearce will be removed, and new Vice President Michelle Van Dyke will be added. Kelly will contact our Wells Fargo account manager and start the paperwork for Michelle to be added.

Angela Bauer Scholarship

Jessica Lee was unable to attend the meeting, however she had prepared a statement and spread sheet that Darrell Lee handed out to the Board. President Peri Suenram suggested the Show Committee work with Jessica on what additional shows the scholarship cuttings may be held other than Miller's three shows. Darrell Lee noted to the Board that a scholarship recipient must be a Montana resident at the time of being awarded the scholarship per the Angela Bauer Scholarship by-laws and the scholarship application form. He said as Jessica was going through the paperwork, she noted that there were several people who are written down as scholarship winners, who are not Montana residents. Peri said that if there is a rule that this must be given to a Montana resident, the Board is obligated to enforce that rule. She said as a non-profit MCHA needs to be very careful to follow the guidelines and not make their own decisions based simply on a kid we like. Going forward Jessica is going to need to make a determination when a scholarship payout is asked for if the recipient was a resident at the time. Peri asked if Jessica could let the Board know who on her list is a Montana resident and any recipient who was paid out incorrectly. She would like a money won column on Jessica's spreadsheet as well as an eligibility column.

After Action Review of Voting Procedures

President Peri Suenram said that the 2022 voting was the first with the new MCHA by-laws. Kelly Fraser said there was an email sent out with a link for the members to vote and the results were then sent to Big Sky Internet Design to be tallied. She said on her end everything was smooth and Tom with Big Sky, indicated that it was smooth on their end as well. Doug and Peri received the compiled tallies from Big Sky, they said it was easy to read. Doug suggested that the final tally may need to be sorted by NCHA number next year so there were no duplicate votes.

Other New Business

The Board would like some of the website to be updated such as the scrolling pictures. Kelly will see about including the 2022 Class Champions in our pictures. We may also be able to change some of the colors on the pages to brighten it up.

Michelle would like to see our sponsors receive a thank you gift at the end of the year. Darrell would like to see the sponsors recognized at the year end banquet as well.

The Board discussed the possibility of producing a joint show with TSCHA. There are some classes that would be similar, and a show may be able to accommodate cutters for both associations.

President Peri Suenram adjourned the meeting at 3:28 p.m.

MCHA Tentative Show Schedule 2023

Proposed MCHA Approved Shows are Highlighted

<u>Date</u>	<u>Show Location</u>	<u># of Shows</u>	<u>Year End Qualifier</u>
March 3-5	Bonina	3	
March 3-5	Spanish Fork	2	
April 6-9	Bonina	3	
April 13-16	Millers Horse Palace	3	X
April 19-23	Ogden UT	3	
May 5-7	Deer Lodge	3	X
May 12-14	Torrington WY ****May approve if Vaughn is a no go	3	
May 18-21	Bonina	3	
May 26-28	Vaughn (TENTATIVE)	2	X
June 9-11	Dillon	3	X
June 15-18	Bonina	3	
	*They are moving their show as to not conflict with Dillon		
July 13-15	Torrington WY	3	
July 20-23	Dillon	3	X
August 10-16	Big Piney	3	
	Weekend show Aug 10-13		
August 25-27	Torrington WY ****May approve if Vaughn is a no go	3	
Sept 14-17	Millers Horse Palace **Discussion on Year End show	3	X